

Decision dated 18.7.2017 regarding letter dated 25.1.2017 received from Assistant Director, EMMC forwarding therewith various CDs along with reports on Violation of Programme Code in various channels: Zee News 'ट्रेन की छत पर स्टंटबाज' 3.12.2016 (16:25:18)

Complaint :

NBSA noted that the EMMC report stated that Zee News channel had telecast a special report titled "Train Ki Chhat Par Stuntbaaz" on 3.12.2016 at 16:25:18. During the broadcast of the report showed various stuntmen doing stunts on moving trains, either hanging from the train door or standing on the roof of the train. The complaint is that though the voice over referred to the risk from poles and light posts near to the track to such passengers who travelled on the roof or hanging to the door, even if there is space inside the train and warned the viewers not try such stunts as these may be fatal and requested anyone witnessing such stunts to stop them, the channel still showed different videos of youth performing stunts. According to the complaint, youngsters are likely to be tempted to repeat such stunts after watching them on the channel.

NBSA at its meeting held on 24.4.2017 among other EMMC reports on violation of Programme Code by various channels had also considered the above report of EMMC, response and also viewed the broadcast on Zee News and noted that what was broadcast on the channel was not "news"; that the programme showed the stunts in great detail virtually eulogizing the stuntmen; that the avowed object could have been achieved by showing the visuals of the stunt once or twice, instead of repeatedly showing the stunts in a loop throughout the broadcast; and that certainly sensationalized the stunts and could lead to youngsters trying to imitate the stunts thereby putting their lives to risk.

NBSA was of the view that the broadcast was done without due diligence and did not serve the purpose stated by the broadcaster in its reply.

NBSA therefore decided that the broadcaster be requested to inform NBSA of the source of the video and that if it was a third party video, what due diligence and pre verification steps were taken prior to broadcast. NBSA also decided to seek a clarification whether it was editorially justified and approved for broadcast. NBSA decided that the broadcaster be requested to appear for a hearing at the next meeting of the NBSA.

Accordingly, the broadcaster was requested to appear before the NBSA for a hearing on 18.7.2017. The following persons appeared before the NBSA:

Zee Media Corporation Ltd. [Zee News]

1. Ms. Ritwika Nanda, Advocate
2. Ms. Petal Chandhok, Advocate
3. Mr. Gulshan Kr. Sachdev, AVP – Legal

NBSA was informed that despite two reminders the broadcaster did not respond seeking their views on the observations made by NBSA at its last meeting.

The broadcaster stated that the video was received from a stringer, who had video graphed the menace which was rampant on this section and the broadcast was in public interest. The railway authorities were fully aware of the problem but were not taking action to stop it. They stated that throughout the programme there was a continuous disclaimer that the viewers should not try the stunts. They stated that by showing the programme, the incident of stunts being shown on the train roofs has stopped substantially.

NBSA noted that the purpose sought to be achieved, could have been achieved by showing the visuals of the stunt once or twice, instead of repeatedly showing the stunts in a loop throughout the broadcast; which sensationalized the stunts; and that the stated purpose got vitiated by looping.

NBSA decided that the broadcaster be warned and that any future transgressions would be viewed seriously. NBSA decided to close the matter and inform the broadcaster and MoI&B accordingly.
